

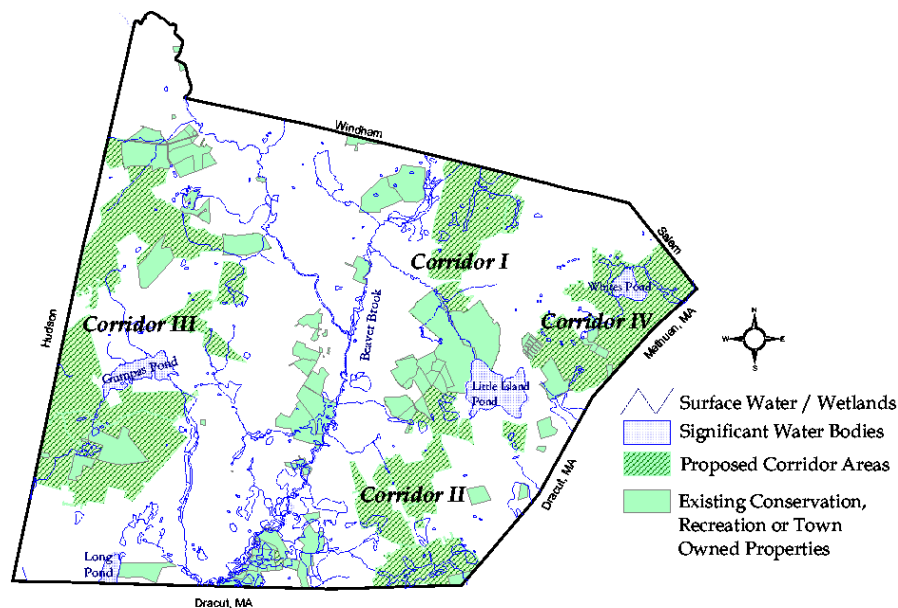
NH DES REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING PROGRAM (REPP) SUCCESS STORY:

PELHAM CORRIDOR DELINEATION

Project Goals and Description

The Town of Pelham has expressed an interest in maintaining open space and rural character by adopting a network of greenway corridors. Town officials responded enthusiastically to the REPP process by helping to identify and map out potential corridors that provide links with neighboring conservation areas. Local volunteers then worked with NRPC staff to delineate the areas on a GIS parcel map. This allowed identification of priority parcels for conservation following the establishment of a local Open Space Subcommittee by the Conservation Committee. As a result, Subcommittee members have noted that the first overview plan for open space has been enabled.

The corridors that are proposed include and provide links to such important ecological features as the Musquash Conservation Land in Hudson, the 1,000 acre conservation initiative in Windham and the Dunlop Conservation Land in Dracut, Massachusetts. The process has been consistent with regional goals supporting multi-town preservation strategies. A very brief synopsis of each corridor follows.



The Pelham Corridor Delineation process identified approximately 3,000 acres. Much of this land is either agricultural or is marginally developable due to wetland constraints.

- **Corridor I** is an extension of a 1,000 acre conservation initiative in Windham. The delineation of this area was a cooperative effort initiated in April of 1997 between both Towns. If established, this corridor would secure a significant north-south route for wildlife movement and offer protection for the water quality of Little Island Pond.
- **Corridor II**, located in the vicinity of Dunlop Pond, will offer protection for the Dunlop Wetland, and secures open space in a rapidly developing part of town. Commission members are considering placing a warrant article before the March (2000) Town Meeting that will authorize the purchase of approximately 40 acres in this vicinity adjacent to town owned land.



- **Corridor III** contains the Gumpas Pond area near the Hudson town line. Formation of the corridor will improve protection for Musquash swamp in Hudson, and will connect with a 416.5 acre conservation area therein.
- **Corridor IV** has been drawn to conserve properties around Harris Pond. Commission members are working with developers to link a patchwork of town owned land that will complement the planned corridor.

Project Success

In Pelham, the Regional Environmental Planning Program has moved the concept of corridors from the abstract to an evaluation of specific parcels that could be acquired through future state or local funding. As a direct result of the corridor delineation process, the Conservation Commission delivered a presentation to the Planning Board in October 1998 on open space goals. As a result of this presentation, the Planning Board indicated that they will utilize the corridor delineation map as a reference for long term planning interests and during subdivision review. Since that time, three landowners have stepped forward to investigate maintaining their properties as permanent open space. Open Space Subcommittee Chairwoman Deborah Waters added that the "community priorities mapping project is a positive first step in what we hope will result in long term environmental planning for our town."

Citizens in town are enthused by the identification process and are moving forward by contacting landowners to inquire about the potential for maintaining their properties as open space. It is expected that phase II of the REPP process will continue to spotlight and refine the detail of the corridor planning and allow for greater public involvement into the eventual implementation.

Contact Information

Deborah Waters,
Chairman Pelham Open Space Subcommittee
6 Harley Road, Pelham 03076
Voice (603) 890-3599

Connie Evans,
Member, Pelham Open Space Subcommittee
21 Hinds Lane, Pelham 03076
Voice (603) 635-8876

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